

METHODIST BODIES

GENERAL STATEMENT

The Methodist churches of America, in common with those of England and other lands, trace their origin to a movement started in Oxford University in 1729, when John and Charles Wesley, George Whitefield, and a number of others began to meet for religious exercises. Finding as they read the Bible that, as John Wesley expressed it, they "could not be saved without holiness, they followed after it, and incited others so to do." During the succeeding years the little company was derisively called "The Holy Club," "Bible Bigots," "Methodists," etc.; and this last term, intended to describe their methodical habits, seems to have been accepted by them almost immediately, as the movement they led soon became widely known as the "Methodist movement." The next step and its outcome are described by John Wesley as follows: "They saw likewise that men are justified before they are sanctified, but still holiness was their object. God then thrust them out to raise a holy people. * * * In the latter end of the year 1739, eight or ten persons came to me in London and desired that I would spend some time with them in prayer, and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come; this was the rise of the United Society."

About this time, the Wesleys came into intimate relations with the Moravians, first on a visit to America¹ and subsequently in London, and at their headquarters in Herrnhut, Saxony, and to the influence of these conferences may be traced much of the spiritual power of the new movement.

The three leaders, although ordained ministers of the Church of England, soon found themselves excluded from many of the pulpits of the Established Church on the ground that they were preachers of new doctrines, and they were obliged to hold their meetings in private houses, halls, barns, and in the fields. As converts were received they were organized into societies for worship, and as the work expanded class meetings were formed for the religious care and training of members. Then the circuit system was established, by which several congregations were grouped under the care of one lay preacher; the itinerancy came into existence, as the lay preachers were transferred from one appointment to another for greater efficiency; and finally, in 1744, the annual conference was instituted, in which Mr. Wesley met all his workers. Thus the principal distinctive features of the Methodist organization grew out of the necessities of the work.

As was natural, the doctrinal position accorded in the main with that of the Church of England, and the Articles of Religion were largely formulated from the Thirty-nine Articles of that church, although no formal creed was accepted save the Apostles' Creed. The stricter doctrines of Calvinism, predestination, and reprobation were cast aside, and the milder emphasis of Arminianism on repentance, faith, and holiness was accepted. As John Wesley said: "The first of these we count as it were the porch of religion; the next, the door; the third, religion itself." This acceptance of Arminianism caused a divergence, though not a permanent breach, between the Wesleys and Whitefield. Whitefield was Calvinistic, though not of the extreme type, and became identified with the Calvinistic Methodists, both the Welsh body² and the Countess of Huntingdon's Connection. He afterwards withdrew from the leadership of the latter body, and gave himself to general revival work in England and America.

¹ See Methodist Episcopal Church, p. 926.

² See Presbyterian bodies, p. 1112.

Though the Wesleys lived and died in full ministerial relations with the Church of England, serious differences arose, as already noted, between that church and the Methodists. In 1745 John Wesley wrote that he was willing to make any concession which conscience would permit, in order to live in harmony with the clergy of the Established Church, but he could not give up the doctrines he was preaching, dissolve the societies, suppress lay preaching, or cease to preach in the open air. For many years he refused to sanction the administration of the sacraments by any except those who had been ordained by a bishop in the apostolic succession, and he himself hesitated to assume authority to ordain; but the Bishop of London having refused to ordain ministers for the Methodist societies in America, which were left by the Revolutionary War without the sacraments, Wesley, in 1784, by the laying on of hands, appointed or ordained men and gave them authority to ordain others. He thus ordained Thomas Coke, D. C. L., who was already a presbyter of the Church of England, to be superintendent of the Methodist societies in America, and set apart for a similar purpose in Great Britain Alexander Mather, who had not been episcopally ordained.

The development of church government, while following the general lines laid down by Wesley, was somewhat different in England and in America. In England the conference remained supreme, and the superintendency was not emphasized. In America the superintendency was in fact an episcopacy which, while not corresponding exactly to the episcopacy of the Church of England, became a very decided factor in church life. In each country, but especially in America, considerable opposition has developed at different times in connection with some features of the parent body, and divisions have resulted. In every case, however, the general principles of the founders have been preserved, and, notwithstanding the various separations, the Wesleyan Methodist Connection in England and the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States remain the strongest representatives of the movement initiated in Oxford nearly two centuries ago.

It is to be noted that the influence of the Methodist doctrine and church organization has not been confined to those bodies which have adopted the name Methodist, but has been manifest in the development of a number of bodies which use modified forms of the episcopal, presbyterial, and congregational systems. In the United States several bodies, including the Evangelical Association and the United Evangelical Church (now one denomination), the United Brethren bodies, and particularly the large number of organizations emphasizing the doctrine of "holiness," or entire sanctification, claim to be true exponents of the doctrines of the Wesleys, while their polity is generally Methodist in type. On the other hand, the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists, with whom Whitefield identified himself, were Presbyterian in polity, though Methodist in every other respect, as are the Wesleyan Methodist and some other Methodist churches in England and America.

STATISTICS

The denominations grouped as Methodists in 1926, 1916, and 1906 are listed in the following table with the principal statistics as reported for the three periods. Since 1916 there have been some changes. The African American Methodist Episcopal Church has disbanded. Other bodies have been added—the Reformed Methodist Church, the Independent African Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Holiness Methodist Church, the last an organization listed in 1916 as the Lumber River Mission under the Evangelistic Associations. For general convenience of reference the Negro bodies have been grouped together in 1926, as in 1916. There were 15 independent churches reported at the 1890 census, with a membership of 2,569; these were not reported as a group, however, at the two succeeding censuses, probably having been absorbed by various denominations.

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS FOR THE METHODIST BODIES, 1926, 1916, AND 1906

DENOMINATION AND CENSUS YEAR	Total number of churches	Number of members	VALUE OF CHURCH EDIFICES		EXPENDITURES DURING YEAR		SUNDAY SCHOOLS	
			Churches reporting	Amount (dollars)	Churches reporting	Amount (dollars)	Churches reporting	Number of scholars
1926								
Total for the group	60,644	8,070,619	56,493	654,736,975	59,483	152,151,978	54,804	6,567,654
Methodist Episcopal Church.....	26,130	4,080,777	25,290	406,165,659	25,790	89,422,307	24,730	3,796,561
Methodist Protestant Church.....	2,239	192,171	2,064	16,817,278	2,160	3,137,211	1,917	173,438
Wesleyan Methodist Connection (or Church) of America.....	619	21,910	555	1,804,719	585	773,981	561	34,314
Primitive Methodist Church in the United States of America.....	80	11,990	79	1,676,800	80	326,598	78	15,190
Methodist Episcopal Church, South.....	18,096	2,487,694	16,443	161,986,430	17,798	41,651,150	15,525	1,802,464
Congregational Methodist Church.....	145	9,691	110	127,775	120	29,529	80	4,807
Free Methodist Church of North America.....	1,375	36,374	1,140	4,921,760	1,269	1,617,802	1,026	69,549
New Congregational Methodist Church.....	26	1,229	21	23,900	19	1,234	3	126
Holiness Methodist Church.....	7	459	7	18,500	7	2,073	7	531
Reformed Methodist Church.....	14	390	13	26,300	13	9,176	12	356
African Methodist Episcopal Church.....	6,708	545,814	5,829	32,092,549	6,492	7,600,161	5,884	288,247
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.....	2,466	456,813	2,370	18,515,723	2,464	4,757,066	2,429	267,141
Colored Methodist Protestant Church.....	3	533	3	36,000	3	6,685	3	98
Union American Methodist Episcopal Church.....	73	10,169	64	478,951	68	222,621	69	4,240
African Union Methodist Protestant Church.....	43	4,086	40	476,269	43	99,563	42	2,851
Colored Methodist Episcopal Church.....	2,518	202,713	2,341	9,211,437	2,477	2,428,234	2,351	103,523
Reformed Zion Union Apostolic Church.....	48	4,538	45	184,075	44	37,601	42	2,882
Reformed Methodist Union Episcopal Church.....	25	2,265	21	74,800	24	17,282	19	673
Independent African Methodist Episcopal Church.....	29	1,003	28	98,050	27	11,704	26	663
1916								
Total for the group	65,686	7,166,451	60,982	317,916,402	64,139	70,887,406	59,191	6,473,500
Methodist Episcopal Church.....	29,315	3,717,785	28,134	215,104,014	28,791	43,993,681	27,549	3,872,264
Methodist Protestant Church.....	2,473	186,908	2,266	7,944,467	2,393	1,509,243	2,081	177,918
Wesleyan Methodist Connection of America.....	579	20,778	514	787,731	525	329,294	500	29,850
Primitive Methodist Church in the United States of America.....	93	9,353	91	829,035	92	147,695	90	14,918
Methodist Episcopal Church, South.....	19,184	2,114,479	17,133	62,428,433	18,751	17,139,398	16,308	1,688,559
Congregational Methodist Church.....	197	12,503	195	166,932	139	13,806	147	8,034
Free Methodist Church of North America.....	1,598	35,291	1,205	2,236,325	1,426	772,038	1,150	58,553
New Congregational Methodist Church.....	24	1,256	18	14,450	16	1,372	6	302
African Methodist Episcopal Church.....	6,633	548,355	6,232	14,631,792	6,516	3,413,395	6,084	311,051
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.....	2,716	257,169	2,475	7,591,393	2,641	1,700,737	2,535	135,102
Colored Methodist Protestant Church.....	26	1,967	16	52,733	23	12,129	24	870
Union American Methodist Episcopal Church.....	67	3,624	59	182,305	65	40,664	54	1,982
African Union Methodist Protestant Church.....	58	3,751	53	205,825	53	47,231	49	2,813
Colored Methodist Episcopal Church.....	2,621	245,749	2,490	5,619,862	2,613	1,736,692	2,541	167,880
Reformed Zion Union Apostolic Church.....	47	3,977	47	79,325	41	13,156	42	2,505
African American Methodist Episcopal Church.....	28	1,310	27	6,280	28	13,455	6	200
Reformed Methodist Union Episcopal Church.....	27	2,196	27	35,500	26	3,420	25	699

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS FOR THE METHODIST BODIES, 1926, 1916, AND 1906—Con.

DENOMINATION AND CENSUS YEAR	Total number of churches	Number of members	VALUE OF CHURCH EDIFICES		EXPENDITURES DURING YEAR		SUNDAY SCHOOLS	
			Churches reporting	Amount (dollars)	Churches reporting	Amount (dollars)	Churches reporting	Number of scholars
1906								
Total for the group	64,255	5,749,838	59,077	229,450,996			55,227	4,472,930
Methodist Episcopal Church.....	29,742	2,986,154	27,888	163,357,805			26,809	2,700,742
Union American Methodist Episcopal Church (Colored).....	77	4,347	59	170,150			76	3,372
African Methodist Episcopal Church.....	6,608	494,777	6,299	11,303,489			6,056	292,689
African Union Methodist Protestant Church.....	69	5,592	68	183,697			66	5,266
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.....	2,197	184,542	2,104	4,833,207			2,060	107,692
Methodist Protestant Church.....	2,825	178,544	2,442	6,053,048			2,118	141,086
Wesleyan Methodist Connection of America.....	591	20,043	480	637,117			475	21,463
Methodist Episcopal Church, South.....	17,683	1,638,480	15,859	37,278,424			13,846	1,040,160
Congregational Methodist Church.....	324	14,729	250	194,275			181	8,785
New Congregational Methodist Church.....	35	1,782	33	27,650			27	1,298
Colored Methodist Episcopal Church.....	2,365	172,996	2,264	3,017,849			2,207	92,457
Reformed Zion Union Apostolic Church (Colored).....	45	3,059	41	37,875			35	1,508
Primitive Methodist Church in the United States of America.....	96	7,558	93	630,700			91	13,177
Free Methodist Church of North America.....	1,541	32,838	1,140	1,688,745			1,066	41,443
Reformed Methodist Union Episcopal Church (Colored).....	57	4,397	57	36,965			54	1,792

AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

STATISTICS

Summary for the United States, with urban-rural classification.—A general summary of the statistics for the African Methodist Episcopal Church for the year 1926 is presented in Table 1, which shows also the distribution of these figures between urban and rural territory.

Membership in the African Methodist Episcopal Church includes persons who, after a probationary period of six months, make public profession of faith and a pledge to conform to the rules of the church.

TABLE 1.—SUMMARY OF STATISTICS FOR CHURCHES IN URBAN AND RURAL TERRITORY, 1926: AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

ITEM	Total	In urban territory ¹	In rural territory ¹	PER CENT OF TOTAL	
				Urban	Rural
Churches (local organizations).....	6,708	1,599	5,109	23.8	76.2
Members	545,814	272,765	273,049	50.0	50.0
Average per church.....	81	171	53		
Membership by sex:					
Male.....	165,615	77,673	87,942	46.9	53.1
Female.....	295,137	143,897	151,240	48.8	51.2
Sex not reported.....	85,062	51,195	33,867	60.2	39.8
Males per 100 females.....	56.1	54.0	58.1		
Membership by age:					
Under 13 years.....	42,230	20,216	22,014	47.9	52.1
13 years and over.....	358,833	172,838	185,995	48.2	51.8
Age not reported.....	144,751	79,711	65,040	55.1	44.9
Per cent under 13 years ²	10.5	10.5	10.6		
Church edifices:					
Number.....	5,927	1,446	4,481	24.4	75.6
Value—Churches reporting.....	5,829	1,424	4,405	24.4	75.6
Amount reported.....	\$32,092,549	\$23,994,224	\$8,098,325	74.8	25.2
Average per church.....	\$5,506	\$16,850	\$1,838		
Debt—Churches reporting.....	1,908	728	1,180	38.2	61.8
Amount reported.....	\$3,332,972	\$2,782,754	\$550,218	83.5	16.5
Churches reporting "no debt" on church edifice.....	3,458	611	2,847	17.7	82.3
Parsonages:					
Value—Churches reporting.....	2,134	936	1,198	43.9	56.1
Amount reported.....	\$4,857,906	\$3,504,773	\$1,293,223	73.4	26.6
Debt—Churches reporting.....	354	210	144	59.3	40.7
Amount reported.....	\$357,137	\$289,738	\$67,399	81.1	18.9
Churches reporting "no debt" on parsonage.....	1,462	580	882	39.7	60.3
Expenditures during year:					
Churches reporting.....	6,492	1,532	4,960	23.6	76.4
Amount reported.....	\$7,600,161	\$4,803,582	\$2,796,579	63.2	36.8
Current expenses and improvements.....	\$6,205,632	\$3,993,308	\$2,212,324	64.3	35.7
Benevolences, missions, etc.....	\$1,257,397	\$726,635	\$530,762	57.8	42.2
Not classified.....	\$137,132	\$83,639	\$53,493	61.0	39.0
Average expenditure per church.....	\$1,171	\$3,135	\$564		
Sunday schools:					
Churches reporting.....	5,884	1,454	4,430	24.7	75.3
Officers and teachers.....	43,383	16,544	26,839	38.1	61.9
Scholars.....	288,247	139,608	148,639	48.4	51.6

¹ Urban territory includes all cities and other incorporated places which had 2,500 inhabitants or more in 1920, the date of the last Federal census; rural territory comprises the remainder of the country.

² Based on membership with age classification reported.

The data given for 1926 represent 6,708 active African Methodist Episcopal churches, with 545,814 members. The classification of membership by sex was reported by 5,687 churches and the classification by age was reported by 4,594 churches, including 3,319 which reported members under 13 years of age.

Comparative data, 1890-1926.—Table 2 presents, in convenient form for comparison, a summary of the available statistics of this denomination for the censuses of 1926, 1916, 1906, and 1890.

TABLE 2.—COMPARATIVE SUMMARY, 1890 TO 1926: AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

ITEM	1926	1916	1906	1890
Churches (local organizations)	6,708	6,633	6,608	2,481
Increase over preceding census:				
Number.....	75	25	4,127	
Per cent.....	1.1	0.4	166.3	
Members	545,814	548,355	494,777	452,725
Increase ¹ over preceding census:				
Number.....	-2,541	53,578	42,052	
Per cent.....	-0.5	10.8	9.3	
Average membership per church.....	81	83	75	182
Church edifices:				
Number.....	5,927	6,302	6,538	4,124
Value—Churches reporting.....	5,829	6,232	6,299	
Amount reported.....	\$32,092,549	\$14,631,792	\$11,303,489	\$6,468,280
Average per church.....	\$5,506	\$2,348	\$1,794	
Debt—Churches reporting.....	1,908	2,437	2,574	
Amount reported.....	\$3,332,972	\$1,518,332	\$1,191,921	
Parsonages:				
Value—Churches reporting.....	2,134	1,867	1,783	
Amount reported.....	\$4,857,996	\$2,025,552	\$1,255,246	
Debt—Churches reporting.....	354			
Amount reported.....	\$357,137			
Expenditures during year:				
Churches reporting.....	6,492	6,516		
Amount reported.....	\$7,600,161	\$3,413,395		
Current expenses and improvements.....	\$6,205,632	\$2,711,121		
Benevolences, missions, etc.....	\$1,257,397	\$602,195		
Not classified.....	\$137,132	\$100,079		
Average expenditure per church.....	\$1,171	\$524		
Sunday schools:				
Churches reporting.....	5,884	6,084	6,056	
Officers and teachers.....	43,383	45,350	41,941	
Scholars.....	288,247	311,051	292,689	

¹ A minus sign (—) denotes decrease.

State tables.—Tables 3, 4, 5, and 6 present the statistics for the African Methodist Episcopal Church by States. Table 3 gives for each State the number and membership of the churches classified according to their location in urban or rural territory and the total membership classified by sex. Table 4 gives for selected States the number and membership of the churches for the three censuses from 1906 to 1926, together with the membership for 1926 classified as under 13 years of age and 13 years of age and over. Table 5 shows the value of church property and the debt on such property, for 1926 alone. Tables 6 presents, for 1926, the church expenditures, showing separately the amounts expended for current expenses and improvements, and for benevolences, etc., and also gives the data for Sunday schools. Separate presentation in Tables 5 and 6 is limited to those States in which three or more churches reported the principal items shown (values or expenditures), in order to avoid disclosing the financial statistics of any individual church. The States omitted from these tables can be determined by referring to the complete list which appears in Table 3.

Ecclesiastical divisions.—Table 7 presents, for each conference in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the more important statistical data shown by States in the earlier tables, including number of churches, membership, value of church edifices, debt on church edifices, expenditures, and Sunday schools.

TABLE 3.—NUMBER AND MEMBERSHIP OF CHURCHES IN URBAN AND RURAL TERRITORY, AND TOTAL MEMBERSHIP BY SEX, BY STATES, 1926: AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION AND STATE	NUMBER OF CHURCHES			NUMBER OF MEMBERS			TOTAL MEMBERSHIP BY SEX			
	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Male	Female	Sex not reported	Males per 100 females ⁽¹⁾
United States	6,708	1,599	5,109	545,814	272,765	273,049	165,615	295,137	85,062	56.1
New England:										
Massachusetts.....	16	15	1	1,662	1,636	26	581	1,025	56	56.7
Rhode Island.....	5	3	2	645	472	173	246	399	-----	61.7
Connecticut.....	7	7	-----	1,062	1,062	-----	353	709	-----	49.8
Middle Atlantic:										
New York.....	58	44	14	10,516	10,009	507	3,877	6,274	365	61.8
New Jersey.....	101	57	44	11,415	9,080	2,335	3,876	7,317	222	53.0
Pennsylvania.....	174	127	47	23,208	20,305	2,903	5,084	8,903	9,221	57.1
East North Central:										
Ohio.....	149	97	52	16,578	15,044	1,534	398	492	15,688	80.9
Indiana.....	67	53	14	7,486	6,995	491	2,553	4,720	213	54.1
Illinois.....	113	88	25	19,366	18,211	1,155	5,439	10,478	3,449	51.9
Michigan.....	42	33	9	10,818	10,481	337	4,009	6,794	15	59.0
Wisconsin.....	5	5	-----	728	728	-----	249	375	104	66.4
West North Central:										
Minnesota.....	8	7	1	1,402	1,358	14	523	865	14	60.5
Iowa.....	27	26	1	2,598	2,536	62	960	1,491	147	64.4
Missouri.....	155	66	89	11,179	8,358	2,821	3,066	5,067	3,046	60.5
South Dakota.....	2	2	-----	56	56	-----	23	33	-----	-----
Nebraska.....	10	9	1	1,540	1,492	48	-----	-----	1,540	-----
Kansas.....	77	45	32	6,336	5,601	735	2,248	3,781	307	59.5
South Atlantic:										
Delaware.....	63	7	56	2,994	725	2,269	989	1,429	576	69.2
Maryland.....	100	30	70	11,478	8,200	3,278	3,679	6,380	1,419	57.7
Dis. of Columbia.....	7	7	-----	2,179	2,179	-----	708	1,179	292	60.1
Virginia.....	108	31	77	14,635	8,059	6,576	4,686	8,445	1,504	55.5
West Virginia.....	64	19	45	2,298	1,302	996	33	63	2,202	-----
North Carolina.....	205	31	174	18,453	6,875	11,578	4,869	9,226	4,358	52.8
South Carolina.....	546	50	496	59,372	9,653	49,719	20,200	33,815	5,357	59.7
Georgia.....	1,173	120	1,053	74,149	24,371	49,778	21,098	39,173	13,878	53.9
Florida.....	694	82	612	47,541	19,847	27,694	15,744	28,288	3,509	55.7
East South Central:										
Kentucky.....	130	42	88	10,492	6,529	3,963	3,745	6,200	547	60.4
Tennessee.....	233	62	171	19,109	10,898	8,211	6,423	12,180	506	52.7
Alabama.....	524	57	467	45,330	13,042	32,288	12,461	22,707	10,162	54.9
Mississippi.....	397	34	363	22,439	4,300	18,139	8,706	13,733	-----	63.4
West South Central:										
Arkansas.....	404	46	358	25,249	7,567	17,682	9,221	15,546	482	59.3
Louisiana.....	206	54	152	12,464	6,238	6,226	4,191	8,273	-----	50.7
Oklahoma.....	107	30	77	5,918	3,328	2,590	2,042	3,876	-----	52.7
Texas.....	640	137	503	33,985	15,593	18,392	10,779	20,930	2,276	51.5
Mountain:										
Montana.....	7	7	-----	200	200	-----	70	130	-----	53.8
Idaho.....	2	2	-----	100	100	-----	48	52	-----	-----
Wyoming.....	6	6	-----	241	241	-----	8	18	215	-----
Colorado.....	13	10	3	2,195	2,087	108	6	13	2,176	-----
New Mexico.....	5	4	1	238	211	27	-----	-----	238	-----
Arizona.....	6	4	2	515	347	168	-----	-----	515	-----
Utah.....	2	2	-----	163	163	-----	-----	-----	163	-----
Nevada.....	2	1	1	46	25	21	14	32	-----	-----
Pacific:										
Washington.....	8	7	1	947	938	9	342	605	-----	56.5
Oregon.....	2	2	-----	306	306	-----	1	5	300	-----
California.....	38	31	7	6,183	5,987	196	2,067	4,116	-----	50.2

¹ Ratio not shown where number of females is less than 100.

TABLE 4.—NUMBER AND MEMBERSHIP OF CHURCHES, 1906 TO 1926, AND MEMBERSHIP BY AGE, 1926, BY STATES: AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

[Separate presentation is limited to States having 3 or more churches in either 1926, 1916, or 1906]

STATE	NUMBER OF CHURCHES			NUMBER OF MEMBERS			MEMBERSHIP BY AGE, 1926			
	1926	1916	1906	1926	1916	1906	Under 13 years	13 years and over	Age not reported	Per cent under 13 ¹
United States.....	6,708	6,633	6,608	545,814	548,355	494,777	42,230	358,833	144,751	10.5
Massachusetts.....	16	15	14	1,662	1,581	1,364	77	1,513	72	4.8
Rhode Island.....	5	5	6	645	614	542	69	576	194	10.7
Connecticut.....	7	6	5	1,062	516	335	70	798	194	8.1
New York.....	58	45	41	10,516	3,214	4,294	859	9,292	365	8.5
New Jersey.....	101	76	69	11,415	7,230	5,971	671	9,809	935	6.4
Pennsylvania.....	174	140	149	23,208	16,798	12,638	937	12,849	9,422	6.8
Ohio.....	149	104	119	16,578	11,149	9,812	16	499	16,063	3.1
Indiana.....	67	52	64	7,486	4,961	5,769	923	6,199	364	13.0
Illinois.....	113	101	115	19,366	16,280	9,833	1,349	10,376	7,641	11.5
Michigan.....	42	28	22	10,818	4,964	1,737	1,401	9,205	212	13.2
Wisconsin.....	5	5	6	728	319	164	8	41	679	-----
Minnesota.....	8	5	5	1,402	1,426	755	159	1,229	14	11.5
Iowa.....	27	21	35	2,598	2,248	1,617	282	2,020	296	12.3
Missouri.....	155	127	154	11,179	13,616	11,318	5	280	10,894	1.8
Nebraska.....	10	9	6	1,540	723	509	-----	-----	1,540	-----
Kansas.....	77	69	92	6,336	4,975	4,934	93	363	5,880	20.4
Delaware.....	63	46	39	2,994	3,290	2,553	84	1,226	1,684	6.4
Maryland.....	100	107	107	11,478	10,509	9,613	647	9,199	1,632	6.6
District of Columbia.....	7	9	7	2,179	2,353	1,928	81	1,449	649	5.3
Virginia.....	108	120	116	14,635	13,581	9,889	546	11,480	2,609	4.5
West Virginia.....	64	33	35	2,298	1,325	1,002	6	128	2,164	4.5
North Carolina.....	205	247	232	18,453	20,433	16,797	1,359	13,868	3,226	8.9
South Carolina.....	546	645	628	59,372	90,469	79,220	6,415	44,581	8,376	12.6
Georgia.....	1,173	1,144	1,212	74,149	89,295	93,626	6,396	52,162	15,591	10.9
Florida.....	694	698	582	47,541	39,402	35,713	4,083	37,588	5,870	9.8
Kentucky.....	130	144	130	10,492	10,187	10,047	734	7,143	2,615	9.3
Tennessee.....	233	291	306	19,109	23,497	23,377	1,472	15,331	2,306	8.8
Alabama.....	524	524	555	45,330	42,658	39,617	4,753	30,114	10,463	13.6
Mississippi.....	397	498	460	22,439	26,133	28,797	627	4,527	17,285	12.2
Arkansas.....	404	435	482	25,249	30,457	26,903	2,584	21,485	1,180	10.7
Louisiana.....	206	196	177	12,464	10,260	9,462	1,077	8,437	2,950	11.3
Oklahoma.....	107	152	136	5,918	7,250	6,243	662	4,572	684	12.6
Texas.....	640	464	440	33,985	30,857	24,919	3,014	23,423	7,548	11.4
Montana.....	7	5	6	200	199	135	12	188	-----	6.0
Wyoming.....	6	3	1	241	97	45	2	24	215	-----
Colorado.....	13	15	15	2,195	1,849	1,139	1	18	2,176	-----
New Mexico.....	5	5	2	238	140	83	-----	-----	238	-----
Arizona.....	6	4	2	515	234	82	-----	-----	515	-----
Washington.....	8	7	10	947	503	334	129	818	-----	13.6
Oregon.....	2	3	1	306	205	60	25	281	-----	8.2
California.....	38	24	22	6,183	2,422	1,533	592	5,550	41	9.6
Other States.....	8	6	3	365	136	68	10	192	163	5.0

¹Based on membership with age classification reported; not shown where base is less than 100.

TABLE 5.—VALUE OF CHURCH PROPERTY, AND CHURCH DEBT, BY STATES, 1926: AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

[Separate presentation is limited to States having 3 or more churches reporting value of edifices]

STATE	Total number of churches	Number of church edifices	VALUE OF CHURCH EDIFICES		DEBT ON CHURCH EDIFICES		VALUE OF PARSONAGES		DEBT ON PARSONAGES	
			Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Amount
United States	6,708	5,927	5,829	\$32,092,549	1,908	\$3,332,972	2,134	\$4,857,996	354	\$357,137
Massachusetts.....	16	14	14	277,700	8	77,425	7	44,000	5	18,700
Rhode Island.....	5	5	5	95,000	2	12,000	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
Connecticut.....	7	6	6	87,000	4	16,000	4	37,000	4	13,000
New York.....	58	51	48	1,144,800	19	82,980	26	156,700	6	9,660
New Jersey.....	101	88	85	1,341,484	48	153,743	52	235,700	15	13,470
Pennsylvania.....	174	159	157	3,064,972	84	304,070	87	504,644	28	53,619
Ohio.....	149	121	120	1,791,060	55	221,599	64	317,400	7	20,000
Indiana.....	67	65	64	716,250	23	98,168	48	106,250	11	7,945
Illinois.....	113	95	95	1,704,387	49	231,039	66	258,250	15	14,025
Michigan.....	42	40	39	1,054,364	21	196,842	23	117,072	10	19,022
Wisconsin.....	5	3	3	27,000	2	8,400	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
Minnesota.....	8	6	5	101,500	4	21,306	4	20,000	2	4,000
Iowa.....	27	26	26	229,835	10	13,673	23	58,200	6	3,015
Missouri.....	155	102	101	611,800	19	78,169	58	149,600	9	10,700
Nebraska.....	10	6	6	115,315	5	15,127	6	27,685	2	3,655
Kansas.....	77	77	77	664,200	26	101,300	60	112,550	7	5,250
Delaware.....	63	61	50	152,325	36	15,122	23	37,440	4	6,300
Maryland.....	100	100	95	1,110,243	48	123,956	48	142,245	16	12,881
Dist. of Columbia.....	7	8	7	716,000	5	43,550	7	44,700	3	7,200
Virginia.....	108	106	105	1,079,537	53	157,961	56	139,271	6	6,417
West Virginia.....	64	37	31	293,095	14	15,531	11	48,000	1	260
North Carolina.....	205	199	197	1,045,200	77	72,931	50	116,215	10	7,897
South Carolina.....	546	512	510	1,466,659	85	104,861	107	148,475	10	4,103
Georgia.....	1,173	1,004	995	2,720,683	316	233,822	240	387,360	30	11,762
Florida.....	694	600	588	2,599,135	213	186,248	232	443,030	35	19,582
Kentucky.....	130	121	119	891,900	45	45,180	60	116,050	11	11,525
Tennessee.....	233	226	218	924,422	53	82,194	59	76,636	10	2,652
Alabama.....	524	463	461	1,367,092	108	125,674	123	206,750	11	2,663
Mississippi.....	397	384	383	710,800	53	49,292	102	97,600	5	1,699
Arkansas.....	404	364	359	886,337	140	131,686	100	106,378	17	7,373
Louisiana.....	206	188	186	631,319	54	108,665	85	113,920	14	19,082
Oklahoma.....	107	96	96	303,835	27	19,824	48	45,050	4	3,351
Texas.....	640	534	519	1,472,390	171	143,920	205	269,325	28	16,296
Montana.....	7	7	7	33,200	4	1,339	7	12,300	1	93
Washington.....	8	8	8	49,700	4	1,390	7	22,600	1	1,000
California.....	38	36	35	566,700	18	37,295	26	109,400	7	9,240
Other States ¹	40	9	9	45,310	5	5,690	10	30,200	3	9,800

¹ Amount included in figures shown for "Other States," to avoid disclosing the statistics of individual churches.

² The figures for parsonages (value and debt) include data for 4 churches in Rhode Island and Wisconsin.

TABLE 6.—CHURCH EXPENDITURES AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS, BY STATES, 1926:
AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

[Separate presentation is limited to States having 3 or more churches reporting expenditures]

STATE	Total number of churches	EXPENDITURES DURING YEAR				SUNDAY SCHOOLS			
		Churches reporting	Total amount	For current expenses and improvements	For benevolences, missions, etc.	Not classified	Churches reporting	Officers and teachers	Scholars
United States.....	6,708	6,492	\$7,600,161	\$6,205,632	\$1,257,397	\$137,132	5,884	43,323	238,247
Massachusetts.....	16	16	59,510	51,486	8,024	-----	14	135	1,212
Rhode Island.....	5	5	13,935	11,285	2,650	-----	5	44	282
Connecticut.....	7	7	30,750	26,290	4,460	-----	6	69	402
New York.....	58	56	262,324	221,955	40,369	-----	53	463	4,060
New Jersey.....	101	101	310,345	263,613	45,432	1,300	92	792	7,021
Pennsylvania.....	174	170	641,160	549,114	92,046	-----	158	1,943	14,378
Ohio.....	149	134	355,698	269,866	48,082	37,750	124	1,703	11,812
Indiana.....	67	65	170,799	148,301	21,433	1,065	61	552	3,445
Illinois.....	113	110	359,532	318,568	40,964	-----	107	1,074	13,891
Michigan.....	42	41	210,214	186,052	24,162	-----	39	368	4,085
Wisconsin.....	5	5	10,708	6,565	4,143	-----	2	10	50
Minnesota.....	8	8	34,885	27,760	4,325	2,800	7	69	691
Iowa.....	27	27	59,644	46,854	11,090	1,700	23	206	1,551
Missouri.....	155	115	107,619	105,180	2,439	-----	101	750	4,271
Nebraska.....	10	7	25,440	21,313	4,127	-----	6	81	607
Kansas.....	77	77	92,435	47,626	6,952	37,857	72	601	3,678
Delaware.....	63	61	64,543	54,754	9,339	450	53	257	1,770
Maryland.....	100	100	225,947	186,447	39,500	-----	94	868	7,898
District of Columbia.....	7	7	44,079	37,060	6,999	-----	7	84	1,245
Virginia.....	108	107	186,798	155,834	30,964	-----	107	835	7,420
West Virginia.....	64	58	58,559	48,509	10,050	-----	47	369	1,430
North Carolina.....	205	203	202,640	162,202	40,438	-----	193	1,512	11,168
South Carolina.....	546	533	437,046	350,952	85,310	784	491	3,757	27,722
Georgia.....	1,173	1,149	743,393	587,211	134,342	21,840	984	5,886	38,047
Florida.....	694	668	786,123	608,432	167,497	10,194	598	4,256	26,998
Kentucky.....	130	130	137,964	114,753	22,511	-----	121	866	5,517
Tennessee.....	233	232	195,536	166,827	28,709	-----	210	1,445	9,221
Alabama.....	524	518	384,136	309,697	74,039	400	482	3,317	22,661
Mississippi.....	397	393	183,422	148,052	32,868	2,502	381	2,494	12,499
Arkansas.....	404	397	317,483	250,098	61,440	6,035	379	3,026	14,726
Louisiana.....	206	204	206,066	177,165	28,901	-----	185	1,155	7,383
Oklahoma.....	107	106	92,186	76,405	15,381	400	97	631	3,429
Texas.....	640	619	441,382	349,650	81,667	10,075	529	3,317	16,780
Montana.....	7	6	5,599	4,213	1,386	-----	7	42	157
Colorado.....	13	8	1,820	50	200	1,570	1	2	7
Washington.....	8	7	21,069	18,686	2,383	-----	8	60	439
California.....	38	38	106,952	85,711	20,241	-----	33	314	2,457
Other States.....	27	9	14,120	11,166	2,544	410	7	40	202

TABLE 7.—NUMBER AND MEMBERSHIP OF CHURCHES, VALUE OF EDIFICES, DEBT, EXPENDITURES, AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS, BY CONFERENCES, 1926: AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

CONFERENCE	Total number of churches	Number of members	VALUE OF CHURCH EDIFICES		DEBT ON CHURCH EDIFICES		EXPENDITURES DURING YEAR		SUNDAY SCHOOLS	
			Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Number of scholars
Total	6,708	545,814	5,829	\$32,092,549	1,908	\$3,332,972	6,492	\$7,600,161	5,884	288,247
Alabama.....	85	7,525	76	166,700	12	3,302	85	60,414	80	3,149
Americus Georgia.....	144	7,925	114	192,400	37	16,895	134	73,317	105	4,089
Arkansas.....	63	4,247	62	204,050	27	36,793	62	57,749	58	2,250
Atlanta.....	131	12,761	104	667,945	41	97,380	131	179,192	127	7,477
Augusta.....	142	9,865	113	244,975	20	5,700	142	54,080	119	4,560
Baltimore.....	107	13,657	102	1,826,243	53	167,506	107	270,026	101	9,053
California.....	40	6,229	36	571,700	18	37,295	39	106,352	34	2,475
Central Alabama.....	86	7,792	74	263,525	21	25,523	83	69,234	79	4,107
Central Arkansas.....	74	5,097	62	139,420	24	18,498	71	56,082	69	2,968
Central Florida.....	116	7,671	89	520,674	39	56,831	102	156,381	96	4,547
Central Louisiana.....	33	1,466	30	53,150	4	5,375	33	21,409	29	864
Central Mississippi.....	78	4,024	72	127,550	14	7,814	77	32,434	72	2,371
Central Oklahoma.....	20	565	20	24,460	6	768	20	9,740	15	364
Central South Carolina.....	65	11,188	58	216,422	16	8,650	59	52,085	57	3,702
Central Texas.....	65	5,234	55	206,875	20	34,346	62	51,803	55	2,523
Chicago.....	63	14,916	47	1,332,237	30	230,480	62	272,233	58	11,198
Colorado.....	33	3,417	127	1,510,800	12	72,572	5	3,035	2	22
Columbia.....	131	11,377	127	1,510,800	12	72,572	131	102,708	106	6,892
Delaware.....	68	3,642	54	238,325	38	16,722	66	90,195	57	2,135
East Alabama.....	92	6,666	85	106,356	15	2,850	92	46,324	83	2,894
East Arkansas.....	81	3,976	69	127,525	25	22,500	81	48,907	74	2,022
East Florida.....	109	10,326	90	875,750	41	48,039	106	177,155	89	4,719
East Mississippi.....	53	3,421	53	97,950	8	5,370	53	33,156	52	1,909
East Tennessee.....	37	2,835	34	250,050	11	27,484	37	36,052	31	1,291
East Texas.....	94	4,103	81	123,625	10	10,421	93	46,509	89	2,430
Florida.....	110	6,664	98	185,450	21	20,340	110	63,187	101	3,399
Georgia.....	178	10,551	157	515,143	60	52,301	172	162,116	148	5,393
Illinois.....	65	6,406	60	542,800	26	42,634	63	132,873	61	3,182
Indiana.....	55	6,055	53	524,100	18	60,443	53	132,326	49	2,852
Kansas.....	53	3,962	53	502,700	24	71,100	53	55,428	51	1,981
Kentucky.....	72	5,492	63	479,000	24	31,717	72	69,564	66	3,073
Louisiana.....	76	6,167	68	374,600	25	57,159	74	127,939	68	3,697
Macon.....	150	8,519	119	291,442	46	33,950	150	71,855	112	4,349
Mexican and Rio Grande Valley.....	11	204	8	15,025	6	2,064	11	5,046	9	139
Michigan.....	49	11,446	46	1,171,864	23	202,342	48	228,818	46	4,365
Middle South Florida.....	123	5,471	110	211,723	32	4,884	117	80,750	107	3,305
Mississippi.....	90	5,016	85	172,150	14	7,091	88	40,296	86	2,981
Missouri.....	75	3,120	56	202,750	8	18,819	60	38,568	54	1,714
Nebraska.....	33	3,849	30	276,815	7	45,327	31	62,447	27	1,704
New England.....	28	3,369	25	459,700	14	105,425	28	104,195	25	1,846
New Jersey.....	101	11,415	85	1,341,434	48	153,743	101	310,345	92	7,021
New York.....	58	10,516	48	1,144,800	19	82,980	56	262,324	53	4,050
North Alabama.....	86	8,962	76	507,080	20	67,268	83	80,638	80	4,444
North Carolina.....	97	8,477	91	406,150	30	17,343	96	81,605	90	4,415
Northeast Arkansas.....	60	3,512	54	131,652	24	26,693	58	53,702	54	2,048
Northeast Mississippi.....	61	4,461	59	84,350	6	2,792	60	22,006	61	2,172
Northeast Oklahoma.....	59	3,631	50	207,600	15	17,536	58	54,679	55	2,126
Northeast South Carolina.....	92	9,171	84	137,801	11	8,057	91	55,984	91	4,587
Northeast Texas.....	72	3,518	55	99,700	13	6,756	72	42,577	53	1,600
North Georgia.....	106	5,854	103	319,923	33	6,606	104	53,258	89	2,834
North Louisiana.....	73	3,574	65	154,450	16	36,436	73	36,746	65	2,124
North Mississippi.....	52	2,560	52	130,950	3	22,000	52	24,317	48	1,417
North Missouri.....	45	3,911	20	79,600	5	7,150	22	19,309	19	786
North Ohio.....	49	6,790	40	797,045	21	119,137	46	155,545	43	5,881
North Texas.....	65	5,164	56	404,975	21	18,109	59	85,949	59	2,245

¹ Amount for Colorado conference combined with figures for Columbia conference, to avoid disclosing the statistics of individual churches.

TABLE 7.—NUMBER AND MEMBERSHIP OF CHURCHES, VALUE OF EDIFICES, DEBT, EXPENDITURES, AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS, BY CONFERENCES, 1926: AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH—Continued

CONFERENCE	Total number of churches	Number of members	VALUE OF CHURCH EDIFICES		DEBT ON CHURCH EDIFICES		EXPENDITURES DURING YEAR		SUNDAY SCHOOLS	
			Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Number of scholars
Northwestern.....	32	3,631	28	\$268,835	13	\$33,619	32	\$30,462	27	1,997
Northwest Mississippi.....	63	2,957	62	97,850	8	4,225	63	31,213	62	1,559
Northwest Texas.....	62	1,561	38	97,330	18	5,369	59	27,654	45	850
Ohio.....	51	4,497	33	401,615	18	23,953	40	91,330	37	3,159
Oklahoma.....	28	1,722	26	71,775	6	1,520	28	27,767	27	949
Palmetto.....	90	10,942	86	210,066	19	7,223	90	100,897	85	5,021
Pennsylvania.....	39	3,912	32	589,777	16	38,115	35	100,001	32	2,084
Philadelphia.....	89	14,114	84	1,492,050	46	190,958	89	377,193	82	9,493
Piedmont.....	91	8,893	86	228,125	20	4,774	87	69,938	84	4,171
Pittsburgh.....	41	4,534	37	897,145	20	67,397	41	138,314	40	2,436
Puget Sound.....	19	1,553	19	109,010	11	6,329	17	38,243	18	794
South Alabama.....	89	7,734	82	118,050	19	7,698	89	58,108	84	3,769
South Arkansas.....	61	3,394	53	110,140	17	3,744	60	40,973	60	2,493
South Carolina.....	78	7,881	72	170,645	8	5,585	76	55,732	69	3,379
South Florida.....	120	11,294	102	588,669	51	49,343	118	240,157	101	5,990
South Georgia.....	151	8,758	139	271,655	40	15,869	145	90,383	136	4,302
South Ohio.....	49	5,291	47	592,400	16	78,509	48	108,823	44	2,772
Southwest Georgia.....	171	9,916	146	217,195	39	5,121	171	59,192	148	5,043
Southwest Louisiana.....	24	1,257	23	49,119	9	4,695	24	19,972	23	548
Southwest Missouri.....	35	4,148	25	329,450	6	52,200	33	49,752	28	1,771
Southwest Texas.....	90	4,072	70	170,775	28	22,510	86	50,697	66	2,130
Tennessee.....	97	7,161	93	375,048	19	41,985	97	84,539	92	4,181
Texas.....	96	5,714	77	234,110	26	34,850	94	78,330	82	2,947
Virginia.....	108	14,635	105	1,079,537	53	157,961	107	186,798	107	7,420
West Alabama.....	86	6,651	68	205,381	21	19,033	86	69,418	76	4,098
West Arkansas.....	65	5,023	59	173,550	23	23,458	65	60,070	64	2,945
Western North Carolina.....	107	9,896	105	638,650	47	55,588	106	120,737	102	6,738
West Florida.....	116	6,115	99	216,869	29	6,811	115	68,493	104	3,948
West Kentucky.....	57	4,958	55	414,200	20	12,463	57	67,043	54	2,393
West Tennessee.....	100	9,155	92	298,024	24	13,725	99	75,602	88	3,800
West Texas.....	85	4,415	79	119,975	29	9,495	83	52,817	71	1,896
West Virginia.....	64	2,298	31	293,095	14	15,531	58	88,559	47	1,430

HISTORY, DOCTRINE, AND ORGANIZATION¹

DENOMINATIONAL HISTORY

Soon after the Revolutionary War Negro members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in different places, dissatisfied with conditions, began to hold separate services, hoping thus to secure larger privileges and more freedom of action than they believed were possible in continued association with their white brethren, and also to avoid certain humiliating discriminations practiced against them. They styled themselves, for the most part, African Methodists, simply because they were of African descent and Methodists, and not because they thought of permanently dissociating themselves from the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Thus, as early as 1787 a company of Negro Methodists in Philadelphia withdrew, built a chapel, and obtained a Negro preacher through ordination by Bishop White of the Protestant Episcopal Church. In 1793 Bishop Asbury dedicated the Bethel Church in Philadelphia, built by Richard Allen, a well-to-do Negro, and the platform adopted by the congregation included the following statement:

¹ This statement, which is substantially the same as that published in Part II of the Report on Religious Bodies, 1916, has been revised by Prof. J. R. Hawkins, general financial secretary, and approved by him in its present form.

We consider every child of God a member of the mystical body of Christ, * * * yet in the political government of our church we prohibit our white brethren from electing or being elected into any office among us, save that of a preacher or public speaker.

As reasons for this action they gave the inconveniences arising from white people and people of color mixing together in public assemblies, more particularly in places of public worship.

In 1799 Allen was ordained deacon, and the church, according to an arrangement already made, remained under the discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the jurisdiction of a white elder. This arrangement, however, did not work very well, and contentions between the white and Negro Methodists of the city increased to such an extent that an appeal was made to the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. The court declared in favor of the Bethel Church, which thus became an independent body. In 1814 the Methodist Episcopal elders announced that the white preachers could no longer maintain pastoral responsibility for the Negro congregation, and in 1816 Richard Allen and 15 others called together a number of similar societies, which had been formed in New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland, to meet in Philadelphia to organize a church of Negro persons with autonomous government. This convention was held in April of that year and resulted in the organization of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The movement received the cordial assistance and sympathy of a number of white persons, among whom were Dr. Benjamin Rush, Robert Ralston, William McKean, and Bishop White, of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

Having become a distinct body by reason of separation from the Methodist Episcopal Church, they found it necessary at this first General Conference to elect one of their own body who was adequate to be set apart in Holy Orders to superintend the connection then formed. The Rev. Richard Allen, who had been ordained to preach by Bishop Asbury seventeen years previously, was unanimously elected to that office and on the eleventh day of April, 1816, was solemnly set apart to the episcopal office by prayer and imposition of the hands of five regularly ordained ministers, one of whom, Absalom Jones, was a priest of the Protestant Episcopal Church under the diocese of the Right Reverend Bishop White, of Pennsylvania.

For the first 20 years the operations of the new denomination were confined chiefly to Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland. Later they were extended to the New England States, New York, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Kentucky, and Louisiana, in the last State being represented in New Orleans alone. Previous to the Civil War, comparatively little was done in the Southern States, but during the War, through the influence of two chaplains in the United States Army, the Rev. W. H. Hunter and the Rev. H. M. Turner, and of some Negro soldiers who were also preachers, two organizations were formed on the South Atlantic coast. After the war the church extended rapidly throughout the South, and to-day it is represented in each of the original slave States, while its northern field includes the Northern States from the Atlantic to the Pacific and the Province of Ontario in Canada.

DOCTRINE AND ORGANIZATION

As already indicated, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, in doctrine and polity, is in substantial agreement with the Methodist Episcopal Church.³ The governing bodies are the General Conference, annual conference, district conference, quarterly conference, and church conference. Bishops preside over general and annual conferences, presiding elders at district and quarterly conferences, and

³ See Methodist Episcopal Church, p. 928.

the preacher in charge at the church conference and all boards of the local church. General boards are constituted by nomination of bishops at the General Conference and must be approved by that conference. They are presided over by one of the bishops. Each General Conference is composed of the bishops, general officers, presidents and deans of universities, colleges, and seminaries, chaplains of the Army, and ministerial and lay delegates (representative of annual conferences and the electoral college in each annual conference jurisdiction).

The General Conference, which convenes quadrennially, is the legislative body of this denomination and also exercises judicial powers and prerogatives over the conduct and character of a certain class of its membership. Annual and district conferences convene once each calendar year and quarterly conferences four times a year. The church conference convenes whenever the pastor and his local church deem it necessary. Special commissions may be appointed or authorized by any of the conferences but such committees when so appointed can proceed to act only within the specified limits and restrictions connected with such appointment or selection, and their action is subject always to the approval of the body appointing them, unless it is expressly stated to the contrary.

Each department of the church is supervised by a board of 18 members, one for each episcopal district, to which the general officer or managing director must submit a report at least annually during each quadrennium; this board is charged also with the duty of filling any vacancies occurring during the quadrennium.

General operations of the church are carried on through departments under the following titles: Publication Department, Missionary Department, Department of Finance, Department of Education, Department of A. M. E. Review, Department of Sunday School Union, Department of Church Extension, Department of Southern Christian Recorder, Department of Allen Christian Endeavor Society, Department of Western Christian Recorder, Department of Sunday School Literature, Department of Historical and Literary Societies, Secretary of Laymen's Movement, Secretary of the General Conference.

WORK

The missionary work of the church is carried on by the Home and Foreign Missionary Department, the Woman's Mite Missionary Society, and the Woman's Home and Foreign Missionary Society, with their auxiliaries.

The Home and Foreign Missionary Department which has the general charge of the missionary activities of the church, was organized in 1844, as a result of the report of the work of William Paul Quinn, who was commissioned by the General Conference of 1840 as the church's first general missionary and was sent out to organize churches and temperance societies and to establish schools for children. The missionary work in the South was begun as early as 1863, and at present the society conducts mission schools and organized churches throughout the United States and foreign lands. Outside of the United States, the fields occupied are the following: Canada; West Africa, including Liberia and Sierra Leone; South Africa, including the Transvaal, Orange Free State, Natal, and Cape Town; the West Indies; and Dutch and British Guiana, in South America.

In 1898 Bishop H. M. Turner organized the Transvaal and the South African conferences of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in South Africa, the former with a church membership of 7,175, and the latter with a membership of 3,625. The membership of these conferences has since been materially increased by their connection with the movement known as the "Ethiopian Movement" in South Africa, a number of churches formerly connected with the Wesleyan Missionary Society of England having withdrawn from that organization on account of its position on the race question. The report for 1926 shows for the

entire foreign field 156 stations, occupied by 4 American missionaries and 152 native helpers; 121 organized churches, with about 29,000 members; and 10 schools of higher grade, with about 2,000 pupils. The total amount contributed for work on the foreign field during the year was \$38,316.

There is published under the auspices of the missionary department a paper called the "Voice of Missions," giving general church news, but emphasizing missionary matters.

The general financial support of the missionary department is secured by 50 per cent of the annual collections taken by the churches and the Sunday schools on Easter Sunday of each year, and 4 per cent of the "dollar money" fund, which is supplemented by money raised by the auxiliary missionary societies. The receipts for the last quadrennium were \$316,285, including Easter collections, \$59,451; Parent Home and Foreign Missionary Society collection, \$12,056; 4 per cent of "dollar money," \$58,665; Woman's Mite Missionary Society, \$17,795; Woman's Home and Foreign Missionary Society, \$31,869; and other designated receipts.

In close relation with the missionary department is the department of church extension, organized for the purpose of caring for weak and struggling churches and assisting in the mission work. At first it was connected with the Home and Foreign Missionary Department, but in 1892 it was established on a separate footing. It is supported by revenues accruing from 8 per cent of the "dollar money" fund, 25 per cent of all "children's day money" admission fees, and special receipts. The receipts for 1926 were \$257,568.

The interest of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in education is indicated by the fact that a special educational department was organized in 1884. There are now under its supervision 17 institutions, including primary, industrial, normal, collegiate, and university courses. Wilberforce University at Wilberforce, Ohio, is the central institution, and connected with it is the Payne Theological Seminary. There is also the Turner Theological Seminary, at Atlanta, Ga.

The income of these institutions includes a nominal sum from the students for tuition, board, room rent, etc.; an appropriation by the General Conference of 8 per cent of the "dollar money"; and other contributions and appropriations as may be specifically needed. A special Sunday in September of each year is set apart as educational endowment day, and all churches and Sunday schools in the connection are required to hold a rally for that cause. The report for 1926 shows \$512,024 expended in the maintenance of these schools, in which there were approximately 6,500 students. The value of the school property is estimated at \$3,972,300 and of the endowments at \$140,000.

The Sunday School Union has for its special purpose the systematizing of Sunday school work among Negroes, providing literature and textbooks, and distributing Sunday school literature. For the purpose of forwarding this work a special children's day, the second Sunday in June, has been set apart, and 50 per cent of the amount raised on that day is devoted to the general interests of the Sunday school work.

The Publication Department is the oldest in the church, originating in 1817. In 1841 the first number of the African Methodist Episcopal Magazine appeared and was followed by a number of weekly papers—the Christian Herald (since 1852 called the Christian Recorder), the Southern Christian Recorder, and others. The Publication Department publishes also the official book of discipline, hymn books, catechisms, records, books for ministers' study, and other official literature. The special magazine of the church is the African Methodist Episcopal Church Review.

The General Conference of 1900, at Columbus, Ohio, organized the Allen Christian Endeavor League, on the same general plan as the Epworth League and the Christian Endeavor Society. There were in 1926 about 4,000 of these societies, with 125,000 members.